SOME NEW BOOKS.

A Star of the Salons.

Since the publication of the well known and greatly admired novel "Lady Rose's Daughter," by Mrs. Humphry Ward, which dealt with a strange and moving situation, there has been a revival of interest in one who must have been the prototype of Mrs. Ward's heroine, Julie de Lespinasse, whose pathetic story will be found set forth vividly and sympathetically in a volume called *A Star of the Salons*, by CAMILLA JEBB (Putnams). This is not the first but it is the best of the recent English books dealing with the subject. The author tells us in a preface that for several years the subject of this book has exercised over her a singular fascination. Her knowledge of Mlle. de Lespinasse, derived in the first instance mainly from her "Letters to Guibert," has been, of course, enormously enlarged since the appearance of the Marquis de Ségur's study, which is distinguished not only for notable discoveries but for extraordinary insight and feeling. By French men and French women Ségur's work will doubtless be accepted as the final word, but Miss Jebb expresses the hope that the story of Julie de Lespinasse as seen by a biographer of her own sex but of a different nationality may reveal some aspects of the case hitherto unnoticed and not uninteresting. The writer of the book before us has also undertaken to give some idea of the background against which Julie moved and the strange transitional epoch in which her life was cast.

I.

Julie de Lespinasse was the illegitimate daughter of Julie d'Albon, the heiress of an ancient and illustrious family, who at the age of 16 was married to the Comte d'Albon, her cousin. The union was unhappy. For more than twelve years, indeed, the young people lived an outwardly united life in the ancient feudal castle of Avauges, which formed a part of Julie d'Albon's inheritance. They had four children, of whom two survived, but soon after the birth of the last—the son and heir—the Comte d'Albon withdrew to his native town of Roanne, where he died. Our author points out that we must not judge the conduct of the young wife, thus left practically a widow, by the standard of our own times. From the point of view of most of her contemporaries it was inevitable that a woman in such circumstances should take a second husband informally; or in other words, a lover. It would seem, however, that Mme d'Albon must have acted with unusual caution; for although all her acquaintances knew that she had a lover nobody knew who he was, and it is only quite recently that his identity has been revealed by the patient research of M. de Ségur. When her legitimate son Camille was 6 years old Mme. d'Albon gave birth to another boy, of whom scarcely anything is known. He was educated apparently in a monastery at Lyons, and in due time became a monk Twenty months later was born his sister, the subject of the present memoir, whom a far different lot awaited. The little girl was baptized the day after her birth in a Lyons church and received the names of Julie-Jeanne-Eléanore, being entered in the parish register as the child of "Claude Lespinasse, bourgeois de Lyon, and dame Julie Navarre, his wife." Both of these were purely fictitious personages, the name of Lespinasse being derived from one of the D'Albon estates.

Of the years which immediately followed the biographer can tell us little beyond the fact that Mme. d'Albon could not bring herself to renounce her illegitimate daughter as practically she had renounced her illegitimate son. The childhood of Julie was almost certainly passed in the ancient château of Avauges, which stood on the road between Lyons and Tarare. Hither the little girl seems to have been brought after a year or more spent, as was then the custom even for legitimate children, in the cottage of some humble foster mother. She was then and always thereafter known under the name of Lespinasse, and some pretext of adoption was probably invented to account for her presence at the castle. The first half dozen years of her childhood were unquestionably happy. She was brought up with the same care as the two legitimate children, and probably treated with equal respect. When she was 7 years old, however, an event occurred which was destined to exercise a most unfavorable influence upon her future—the marriage, namely, of her half sister, Diane d'Albon, with Gaspard de Vichy-Champrond, a neighbor and an old friend of the family In order to explain how Julie's fortunes were affected by this alliance our author here finds it necessary to consider the question of her descent on the father's side, a question much debated by the gossips of her own day, and in later times by litterateurs who have interested themselves in her history. The secret was preserved with such extraordinary care and success that it remained undeciphered until within the last few years, when the key to the mystery was found by M. de Ségur in some hitherto unpublished manuscripts. The father of Julie de Lespinasse was, he thinks and virtually demonstrates, no other than the very Gaspard de Vichy who seven years after her birth became the husband of her elder sister. The situation is certainly not a pleasant one to contemplate. Our author's comment is: "We can imagine the suitor, level headed, hard natured, bent at all costs upon an advantageous establishment for himself and careless of the means by which it should be obtained; the girl Diane, knowing nothing of the horrible complication, and fascinated, perhaps, as girls often have been fascinated, by the finished manners and ripe experience of a lover twenty-one years older than herself; the mother, heart wrung, conscience stricken, yielding reluctantly to the pressure brought from both sides to bear upon her."

II.

It must have been plain enough to Mme. d'Albon that no good could come of such a marriage for any of the persons concerned, but the biographer deems it doubtful whether she at first foresaw the full extent of the calamity thus entailed upon the poor child, whose interests should have been as sacred to Gaspard as they were to herself. As a matter of fact the strange and sinister son-in-law soon showed himself firmly resolved that the portion of his wife, the only legitimate daughter, should not be diminished by any provision for her unacknowledged sister. He offered a determined resistance to every measure attempted for this purpose by Mme. d'Albon. So fierce, indeed, was the opposition made by him, and at his prompting by his wife, Diane, and brother-in-law, Camille d'Albon, that the Countess found herself obliged to give way. All that she ventured openly to do was to insert in her will a clause bequeathing to "Julie-Jeanne-Eléanore Lespinasse, daughter of Claude Lespinasse and Julie Navarre," an annuity of 300 francs, with a further legacy of 6,000 francs to be paid in case she either married or entered religion. Unknown, moreover, to her ex-lover and present son-in-law, Gaspard, and to her legitimate son, Camille, the Countess contrived to lay by a large sum of money in a desk in her room, and on the eve of her death, which occurred about a year and a half after her will was drawn, she called her little daughter Julie, then aged 15, to her bedside and secretly gave the whole amount into her possession with injunction to keep it for herself. The poor child, unfitted alike by age, temperament and education for the grim struggle for existence which thenceforth was to be her portion, handed over the money intact to her half-brother Camille (who did not hesitate to take and retain it), and she never benefited to the extent of a penny by her mother's dying wish.

Up to the time of her mother's death the girl, beyond a general impression that there was something very wrong indeed, seems not to have understood the true nature of her position. Perhaps it was the reading of Mme. d'Albon's will, perhaps the uncompromising explanations of her relatives, which revealed to this petted daughter of a wealthy house the existence of poverty and humiliation which awaited her. However this may be, her anguish and grief aroused the sympathy of Diane de Vichy, who had come of course to attend her mother's funeral. Even Gaspard's heart seems to have been touched with something like pity for the daughter whom he had done his best to render destitute. They proposed to the desolate girl that she should make her home with them, an offer which she gladly accepted, for indeed, she had no other resource.

The next four years of Julie's life were passed in discharging the functions of a governess to her elder sister's children. The position of governess in those days was not sharply differentiated from that of an upper servant. To be relegated therefore to such a status may well have seemed to a girl brought up as Julie had been a bitter humiliation. It is not therefore surprising that when in 1752 Mme. du Deffand, a sister of Gaspard de Vichy, arrived at Champrond on a visit and conceiving a great liking for Julie de Lespinasse invited the young girl to live with her as a companion in Paris the offer should have been eagerly accepted. It was not, however, until April, 1754, that Julie went to the capital, and the intervening time was spent in a convent.

III.

Mme. du Deffand, the remarkable woman who was destined to exercise an incalculable influence upon the young girl's fortunes, was then in her fifty-sixth year The fame of her intellectual powers, of her brilliant and scathing sarcasm and her almost unrivalled ability in conversation has endured down to our own day. Although born at Champrond, her upbringing had been by no means that of a country girl. Like most young ladies of her time, indeed, she was early sent to a convent school, and only left it on her marriage to the Marquis du Deffand, at the age of 21 (1718). The fashionable Paris convent of that day, however—and such was that where Marie de Vichy received her education—was no abode of Arcadian simplicity nor of innocence. The heads of such institutions were women of high rank, who, despite their vows, had by no means renounced the world. Visitors of both sexes found their way frequently within the precincts; exeats for the pupils, at all events, were easily procured; the flow of communication with mundane affairs was uninterrupted, and the latest court scandal was as likely as not to form the topic of conversation. We may then be tolerably certain that Mlle. de Vichy was no ingénue of the sheltered type when she accepted the husband selected for her by family arrangements and—the marriage scarcely over—decided that as a husband the Marquis du Deffand was impossible. We are told that "he was always taking trouble to make himself disagreeable."

The young Mme. du Deffand made her way at once to the very heart of that brilliant, fascinating and inconceivably corrupt society. She had claims as a beauty no less than as a wit, and she soon won the favor of the Regent himself, who is said to have loved her faithfully for at least a fortnight and who doubtless had more than one successor in her affections. Mme. du Deffand seems to have stepped beyond the line drawn by public opinion and after the Regent's death found herself more or less ostracized in Paris She at first set to work to repair her mistake by seeking reconciliation with her husband, but they soon parted once more and the courageous woman had recourse to a second method of recovering respectability, not strictly in accordance with the conventions of the present century. As a preliminary she obtained a judicial separation from her husband and then took to herself a lover *en titre*. The President Hénault, the person on whom Mme. du Deffand's choice had fallen, was a widower He was the presiding judge of a court of appeals and of a distinguished although not a noble family, and he was one of the most attractive men of his time. It was mainly through him that Mme. du Deffand regained her social position, and that he was useful in other ways is evident from the fact that during many years he secretly paid her an annuity of six thousand francs and through his influence at court procured for her annually an equivalent sum from the royal treasury. There is no doubt that henceforth, apart from this alliance "of convenience," Mme du Deffand's conduct was really irreproachable. Soon a small but choice company, the friends chiefly of Hénault, gathered in her modest drawing room, and, again through Hénault's influence she secured admission to the so-called "court" of Sceaux, which up to the death of the Duchesse du Maine, which took place in 1753, was a meeting ground for all the most brilliant men and women of the day. It was at Sceaux that Mme. du Deffand made the acquaintance of the celebrated mathematician D'Alembert, afterward to become the lifelong admirer but never satisfied lover of Julie de Lespinasse

IV.

The salon organized by Mme. du Deffand started on its career with every prospect of success, but its mistress meanwhile had to struggle against one of the worst calamities which can befall a human being. She found herself gradually becoming blind, and that doubtless was one of the reasons why she desired a companion. To her blindness was doubtless due the mania which led her literally to turn night into day. For her the day began regularly at 6 o'clock in the evening, the hour at which she first quitted her bedroom. Then began the stream of visitors, which ultimately included all the brilliant and interesting persons in Paris. This curious life was shared by Julie de Lespinasse, for Mme. du Deffand fulfilled her promise that the girl should rank as a real companion and not as an upper grade menial. She was not even engaged as a secretary, for Mme. du Deffand sometimes wrote her own letters with the help of an apparatus contrived for keeping the lines straight and sometimes had them written for her by a majordomo. Reading aloud may have been to some extent a part of the agreement, since after Julie quitted the apartment of Mme. du Deffand in the convent of St. Joseph her place was supplied by a *lectrice en titre*. Whether Julie received a salary for her services is unknown. We know, however, that less than three months after her arrival in Paris a contract was drawn up by which the Duke of Orleans undertook to pay her 693 francs annually for the rest of her life. The capital required for the purchase of this life annuity may have been supplied by Mme. du Deffand. With the stipend of 300 francs a year inherited from her mother Julie's spending money must have amounted to about $215 a year. Every penny of this meagre income was needed for clothes, for she was one of those persons who repay careful dressing.

Her figure was singularly graceful, and her face, though by her own admission never regularly pretty, might fairly at this early period of her life be called charming. A portrait by Carmontelle shows her as she was while still in the bloom of youth and before smallpox, the dire disease by which one woman in every four was then permanently disfigured, had set its mark upon her. Speaking of this portrait the biographer observes that her dark brown hair, concealed according to the universal custom of the time beneath a layer of powder, is arranged in one of the pleasing and unexaggerated coiffures worn at the period and not succeeded until 1770 by the towering structures which made kneeling on the carriage floor compulsory for ladies in full dress. The details are added that "her eyes are large and dark, and the 'tip tilted' nose imparts a certain shade of piquancy to her thoughtful and intelligent face." All eye witnesses agree, however, that the special attractiveness of her appearance lay in her expression. "Though not actually beautiful, you are distinguished looking and attract attention," wrote President Hénault. To the same effect wrote the cold and reserved D'Alembert: "What I should say of your appearance is only what seems to strike everybody, namely, that your whole bearing is most graceful and distinguished, and that you have much mind and expression in all your features seems far preferable to mere soulless beauty." Her faithless lover, Guibert, was also to testify: "That which preeminently distinguished her was the supreme charm without which beauty can only attain to mere lifeless perfection, namely, expression. Hers had no particular characteristic; it combined them all, so that you could not precisely say that it was either witty or lively or sweet or dignified or humorous or gracious." The admiration, however, attracted by Julie's appearance was slight compared with that bestowed on her manner and conversation. The exquisite circle which eventually had gathered around Mme. du Deffand and which comprised the fine flower of Parisian intellect and breeding could not sufficiently express astonishment at the ease with which the young rustic, as though to the manner born, at once became one of themselves.

The relations between Julie de Lespinasse and her patroness continued for some years to be highly creditable to both. The girl had certainly some hardships to endure, but the congenial and appreciative atmosphere in which she found herself made them at first seem light in comparison with her miserable experiences in her father's château at Champrond. On her side she spared no trouble to please the people who received her so kindly and above all the benefactress who had brought her into their circle. There is no doubt that she won approbation from the most fastidious of Mme. du Deffand's friends, and she was no less successful in conciliating the servants of the household, an achievement involving greater difficulties. To Mme. du Deffand, on her part, must be conceded the honor which is her due She displayed at first no resentment, but rather satisfaction, at the favor won by Julie from some of her oldest friends, both male and female. When a younger admirer appeared on the scene, her behavior seems to have been on the whole not unworthy of a conscientious guardian; though it is undoubtedly from this incident which took place when they had lived together for three or four years that must be dated the first perceptible straining of the relations between the aunt and niece The hero of this first love affair was descended from a noble and ancient Irish family, which still exists, its head, Viscount Taaffe, being settled in Austria M. Taaffe was in the habit of paying long visits to Paris, and like many other distinguished foreigners, became for a time a regular attendant at the salon of Mme. du Deffand. His appearance marked a momentous epoch in the experience of Julie de Lespinasse

If we except D'Alembert, of whose silent devotion she was perhaps scarcely conscious, her admirers hitherto had all been elderly men, and it had never occurred to her to take any of them seriously. The feeling with which she inspired the newcomer was of a warmer kind and was by her fully reciprocated, and Mme. du Deffand suddenly awoke to the fact that a flourishing romance was in progress beneath her roof. That she should have strongly objected to the affair was natural enough. It was not impossible that Taaffe had already a wife in Ireland, and the gallant Irishman's fortune probably consisted mainly of debts. In view of Julie's almost penniless condition it was altogether unlikely that the courtship could result in matrimony, and Mme. du Deffand, with her hard won knowledge of the seamy side of life, is not to be blamed for desiring in her niece's interest to put an end to it. Of the two persons mainly concerned, the gentleman received her remonstrances with a docility which proves that he was at heart convinced of their reasonableness. The position which Julie took was different. Instead of promising compliance with the grave admonitions of her patroness she broke out into protest with a vehemence which dismayed the elder woman, by whom the potentialities of passion hidden beneath a surface of consummate tact and self-control had hitherto perhaps been unsuspected. Finding argument and reason unavailing, Mme. du Deffand had recourse to authority and peremptorily forbade the girl to see or speak to Taaffe again, enjoining her to remain henceforth in her room whenever this gentleman came to call at the Convent of St. Joseph. She related in after years that Julie, driven to despair by the thought of never again meeting her lover, took a dose of opium which nearly proved fatal and had a lasting effect upon her health. There is no doubt that Julie de Lespinasse at a later and much graver crisis of her life did make an attempt at suicide, which was only frustrated by the intervention of Guibert. By and by to all outward appearances a reconciliation ensued between the aunt and niece. But their first love for one another was never really restored, and with every year the estrangement grew, till the last remannt of affection perished, and left them avowed and irreconcilable enemies.

V.

The day of reckoning, though long deferred, came at last one evening in April, when Mme. du Deffand discovered that her friends were paying much more attention to her companion than to herself. The discovery made her frantic, and she drove the younger woman from her house. After taking refuge for a while in a convent or in the house of a female friend, Julie, with the aid of D'Alembert and Mme. de Geoffrin, organized a salon of her own. Taken altogether, the income of the subject of this biography, including an annuity given her by Mme. de Geoffrin, amounted to about $1,850. Her lodgings were taken on a nine years lease at a rent of about $207. Her rooms occupied the second and third floors of a modest house no longer existing, at the junction of the Rue Bellechasse and the Rue St. Dominique, about a hundred yards from the abode of her former protectress. The rooms were ten in number, five on each story. On the lower floor was an antechamber, a salon, the bedroom of Mlle. de Lespinasse, a dressing room and a small bedroom for a servant. On the floor above was the bedroom of her maid, a kitchen and empty apartment, used as a lumber room, and two other rooms ultimately sublet to D'Alembert. Narrow as her income was, Mlle. de Lespinasse seems to have had enough for her toilet. Guibert, who was par excellence a lady's man, and hence no contemptible judge, credits her with being in respect of dress an excellent manager. In the inventory of her effects made after her death, there were enumerated no fewer than forty gowns of silk and satin. She managed in one way or another to give two dinners a week.

The salon of Mlle. de Lespinasse was from the outset a great success. The gatherings there included almost all the distinguished persons of every calling and nationality to be found in Paris between the years 1764 and 1776. Fine ladies, soldiers, statesmen, divines, scholars, men of letters—every class was there represented. There Turgot discussed his abortive social reforms. There Condorcet, the 'philosophic marquis, brought his ungainly personality and his wild revolutionary ideas. There the Italian Ambassador Galiani, "the pretty dwarf," gesticulated and held forth at will. There David Hume sought counsel and sympathy from "the most sensible woman in Paris." There the fascinating Comtesse de Boufflers, tearing herself for a while from the semi-royal circle where as mistress of the Prince de Conti she reigned supreme, poured forth her startling paradoxes. There the warm hearted Duchesse de Châtillon, who worshipped Julie de Lespinasse, hung eagerly on every word that fell from the lips of her idol. There also might be seen the stately Spaniard Aranda, and there for a brief space the enigmatic figure of Lord Shelburne. D'Alembert, of course, was always present, except when absent from Paris.

All cont mporaries agree that the distinguishing characteristic of this particular salon was its catholicity, and that this again was entirely due to the unique personality of the hostess, which enabled her to attract and combine into a homogeneous whole the most diverse and incongruous elements. As Marmontel observed at the time, no ordinary woman could have started discussions among such remarkable men and taken part in them as she did with a closeness of reasoning equal to theirs and sometimes with an eloquence peculiar to herself. No ordinary woman could have varied the conversation at her will, introducing each new topic with the ease of a fairy waving her magic wand. Grimm testifies that she possessed in the most eminent degree the difficult and precious art of drawing out the best intelligence of others. No one, La Harpe recalled, could better do the honors of her house. Every one found his own place there and always to his own satisfaction. "She had great knowledge of the world, and that most attractive kind of politeness which seems to proceed from a personal interest in each individual." It is true that conversation was sometimes varied with "readings," that terrible institution of the eighteenth century. From the worst horrors of this system, however, Julie de Lespinasse was comparatively secure, for such was the reputation of her salon in literary circles that only writers with something to recommend them could aspire to the advertisement of appearing there. Thus Marmontel gave her the first reading of a comic opera, La Harpe of a tragedy, and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre of his "Voyage à l'Isle de France." Julie's salon closed theoretically at 9 o'clock, after which she and most of her guests went out to finish the evening elsewhere.

VI.

What makes the social success of Mlle. de Lespinasse the more amazing is that not only was she poor and illegitimate but also at the period of her greatest popularity she was, according to the foolish standard of that time, no longer a young woman, and moreover was hopelessly disfigured by the smallpox. The biographer quotes a significant phrase of hers, apparently meant in apology for her independent mode of life: "It does not matter what one does when one is 30 years old and, to use fine language, ravaged by disease." The conventional dogmas of her day taught that only in the heyday of youth could one of the inferior sex hope to inspire love. The most remarkable of many contradictions to the "youth and beauty" theory was to be furnished by Julie de Lespinasse. She had completed her thirty-fourth year when she cast her eyes on the Marquis de Mora, son and heir of the Spanish Ambassador at Paris—a young man only 22 years old, the fine flower of the proudest aristocracy in Europe, the idol of beautiful and high born ladies. Such an attachment might well have been regarded as a madness only to be surpassed by the greater madness of expecting a return in kind. Yet here the impossible happened, for Julie de Lespinasse was destined to be loved by this man as few women are loved by men, and, indeed, far better than she loved him. It is certain that he loved her for *le bon motif*, that their relations were absolutely pure, and that they were on the point of being married when, at the age of 28, he prematurely died with Julie's name upon his lips. We can well believe with the biographer that to the lonely, disfigured woman, no less than to Mora, with all his early knowledge of the world and consequent world weariness, the attachment must have seemed the awakening to a new life. At first, it appears, Julie felt an honorable reluctance to accept the devotion so freely tendered, but her lover made light of every argument against his suit. "You love me," he urged, "and where love is, nothing else is of any account." "And soon," she says, "he persuaded me" to believe him. All the latent passion of her nature awoke in response to his, and with hyperbolic fervor he declared that in the art of loving even the women of his own ardent South were mere children in comparison with her.

We have said that the Marquis de Mora loved Julie better than she loved him. It was not many months before he died that she contracted the great passion of her life for the Comte de Guibert, who in the eyes of her biographer was but a "pinchbeck hero." It is true that at the age of twenty-five he had attained by merit rather than favor the rank of colonel, and two years later published a "General Essay on Tactics" which created a European sensation. Concerning the technical merits of this work it is enough to say that they successively commanded the approval of two such military critics as Frederick the Great of Prussia and the Emperor Napoleon. In Paris, owing to its advocacy not only of military but also of political and economic reforms, the book had an unparalleled success. The soldier writer quickly became the demigod of every salon, and women of the highest rank debated gravely the question: Which would be the best of the three—to be M. de Guibert's mother, his sister or his mistress?

The beginning of Guibert's acquaintance with Mlle. de Lespinasse dates from a garden fête given by a great financier who was a friend of D'Alembert. The impression which she then made upon Guibert may be gathered from certain passages in the glowing encomium composed by him on the night of her funeral: "She was 38 [really 39] years old when I first met her, and her figure was still distinguished and full of grace She was far from beautiful, and, moreover, disfigured by smallpox. But her plainness had nothing repulsive about it, even at the first glance. At the second you took it as a matter of course, and at the third you had forgotten it." There is no doubt that Guibert was attracted to her almost at first sight and hit upon a singular artifice for stealing his way into her heart. He posed as an *homme incompris*. He had, he explained, an attachment of some years standing to a lady who did not, in his estimation, love him as he deserved to be loved, and his noble soul was in consequence afflicted with a profound melancholy. Of the truth of this myth he convinced Mlle. de Lespinasse, who listened to him with sympathy, and, though urging him to remain faithful, could not but feel that he had been unfortunate in his choice. As it happened, the lady in question was said to be married, but this detail seems not to have been thought worth considering. It did not occur to Julie that there was a certain risk in receiving and reciprocating confidences of so delicate a nature. She did not realize that through a whole winter Guibert was becoming more and more necessary to her. It was not until they were on the eve of a separation that she became conscious of the importance which his presence had assumed for her. It was then that she wrote him a letter of which she was thereafter to say: "I detest, I abhor the fatality which urged me to write you that first note." It formed the beginning of the famous correspondence, always associated with her name, and marked the first decisive step on the path from which it was never more in her power to escape.

VII.

We have come to a crisis in the life of Mlle. de Lespinasse which the sympathetic biographer shrinks from describing in detail. Two points, however, she feels in justice bound to recognize: First, that it is difficult to judge such a case by the standard of the present generation; secondly, that Mlle. de Lespinasse was as far as possible from resembling the crowd of light hearted sinners who on every side surrounded her, and that she suffered agonies of remorse such as few women of her entourage would have been capable of feeling on the same score. She wrote to Guibert: "The crime of a moment has ruined my whole life. What does it profit me that I was always virtuous before I knew you? I know that I have sinned against virtue and against myself, and I have lost all self-respect." It was on February 10, 1774, a date unmistakably indicated by more than one reference in her letters, that she forfeited, as she says, all right to respect herself. By a coincidence of unspeakable horror, it was on the self-same night when her true lover the Marquis de Mora, received from a violent hemorrhage his death blow, that he was betrayed by the woman whom he had trusted so entirely, but of whose betrayal most happily for him he was never to know. The inevitable Nemesis, however, was not long delayed for Mlle. de Lespinasse, but it did not assume the form of public exposure and disgrace. Nothing in her whole story is more remarkable than the utter absence of suspicion as to the true nature of her relations with Guibert. It was not till one of the pair had been dead for thirty-three years, and the other for nineteen, that the posthnmous publication of the "Letters" revealed the long kept secret to the intense astonishment of their few surviving contemporaries. Yet they seemed to have been constantly together, passing hours alone either in a private box at the Opéra or in Julie's room in the Rue Bellechasse. That no one in these circumstances should have even guessed at the truth testifies alike to the high reputation borne by Mlle. de Lespinasse and, in justice it must be added, to the honorable reticence maintained by Guibert, a reticence all the more creditable to him that it scarcely seems to have been generally one of his habits.

Julie's punishment was to come in more subtle fashion, in the first instance through the man she had wronged and in the second through that other man for whom she had made so great a sacrifice. On his dying bed the Marquis de Mora gathered sufficient strength to write once more in these words to the woman whom he had loved with absolute devotion: "I was about to have seen you once more, and now I must die. What a fearful stroke of fate! But you once loved me, and the thought of you is still sweet to me. It is for your sake that I am dying."

There is no doubt that in the first anguish of remorse and despair the recipient of these words resolved on taking her life, and the resolution will surprise nobody acquainted with her passionate and impulsive nature. That Guibert alone suspected her purpose and succeeded in dissuading her from it is rendered equally certain by the incessant reproaches which on this very score she afterward heaped upon him. The sight of her agony evidently inspired him for a time with genuine pity, and perhaps with some fleeting contrition, and in his efforts to reconcile her to life he showed a tenderness which she was unable to resist. His contrition lasted for a while, and it was only gradually that Julie realized that for her all possibility of happiness had vanished on the day that Mora breathed out his life in an inn at Bordeaux on his way to Paris. Gradually Guibert began to talk to her about the necessity of his making a marriage of convenience. He sedulously represented his matrimonial designs as based entirely upon prudence, and irrespective of any woman in particular. Through the winter of 1774-75 he had in conversation with Mlle. de Lespinasse allowed the subject so completely to drop that she half believed him resolved upon a single life, while all the time negotiations were in progress, and he was losing no opportunity of paying his court to Mlle. de Courcelles, who was not only well dowered but beautiful. Once the betrothal was about to be formally announced, however, it became impossible any longer to conceal the truth. After a clumsy attempt at preparation which aroused an agony of apprehension in his unhappy victim he told her of his approaching marriage, representing it entirely as an affair of *convenance* and repressing the fact that he had anything more than a formal acquaintance with his future bride. To the forsaken woman it seemed that now indeed she had been stabbed to the heart. "If we must cease to love, then I must cease to live!" was the heartbroken cry which rose to her lips.

VIII.

The biographer emphasizes the fact that Julie regarded Guibert's marriage as constituting an impassable barrier between him and her. We are reminded that such a point of view was by no means in her time universally recognized, nor was it shared by Guibert himself. The letters recently published make it plain that the honeymoon once well over he was anxious to renew his former relations, but encountered a resolution which he found it would be impossible to shake. For the short remainder of her unhappy life Julie de Lespinasse was free from reproach, and in the judgment of her biographer the determination not to injure another woman expiated in some measure for former wrongdoing. Her attitude, indeed, toward her unconscious rival was at all times thenceforth conspicuously generous. The bitterness of her heart overflowed often enough in reproaches to Guibert, but of his betrothed she uniformly spoke in terms of respect and even of kindness. Once she terrified Guibert beyond measure by appearing unexpectedly in his rooms on an evening when she knew that he was to receive a visit from Mlle. de Courcelles and her mother. The wretched man vainly implored her to withdraw before their arrival. She was determined to see his future wife, but the scene which followed relieved him of his fears. Mlle. de Lespinasse made herself as delightful as only she could The girl was fascinated by her charm of manner and the caressing tenderness with which she welcomed the fiancée of an old and valued friend. Next day Julie, as if determined to be thorough in her great renunciation, wrote to Guibert: "I thought her charming and well deserving of the interest you feel in her. The manners and appearance of her mother are also most pleasing and attractive. Yes, you will be happy." Guibert was gratified and even touched by this magnificent self-abnegation, but he considered that it was scarcely maintained with sufficient consistency. There was in his opinion a want of good faith about such letters of congratulation as that which he received after the formal signing of his marriage contract: "And so the sentence is signed! God grant it may be as decisive for your happiness as my death! Farewell: may your life be always too full and too happy to leave room for the remembrance of an unfortunate woman who loved you." Manlike, he did not like even to think that he was killing the woman whom he professed still to love, but to be told it was really very unpleasant. It is certain, as the biographer says, that Guibert spoke no more than the truth when he wrote about this time to Julie de Lespinasse the words which roused her to an inexplicable fury of resentment: "Do not break your heart for me, I beseech you. I am not worthy of all that you have suffered for my sake."

When Mlle. de Lespinasse declared that Guibert had signed her sentence of death on the same day as his marriage contract, she spoke no more than the truth. The biographer deems it extremely unlikely that she would in any circumstances have lived to be old, and the mental suffering of the last few years had of course gravely affected her always fragile health. This final blow, which she survived barely a twelvemonth, must certainly have hastened the end. At her funeral D'Alembert and Condorcet were chief mourners. By her own express wish the last observances were performed in very simple fashion and a hideous custom, then prevalent, of laying out the dead in front of their homes as a spectacle for all who passed by was omitted. Miss Jebb points out on her final page that Julie de Lespinasse never ceased to believe that if Mora had lived to know all he would have forgiven her. D'Alembert, we know, although cut to the heart when he first learned of her relations with Guibert, did live to forgive her. Surely, then, the biographer thinks, it is scarcely for us to be severe in condemning her. "Across the intervening gulf of over a hundred years her unique and fascinating personality pleads with us on her behalf, as it pleaded then even with those who had suffered through her fault. We find in her some things which we needs must blame, but far more to be admired, pitied and loved."

M. W. H.

The Mongols.

A painstaking and creditable attempt to treat an interesting theme concerning which extensive and accurate knowledge is obtainable only with much difficulty is embodied in a volume of some four hundred pages called *The Mongols* by JEREMIAH CURTIN (Little, Brown & Co.). The book would have been more satisfactory if the author had indicated his sources of authority: there is no bibliography. As we have no reason to believe that the writer was a Chinese scholar we must infer that he relied largely on previous European researches, the results of which have been to a considerable extent transmitted in the Russian and Polish languages, with both of which the late Mr. Curtin was familiar. It cannot be denied that his failure to mention by name any of the authors on whom he bases his narrative is much to be regretted, for no single statement of fact can be accepted by strangers without verification. Having known the writer personally, however, we have no doubt that the general impression conveyed by him concerning the primitive condition of the Mongol people and their almost world wide conquests under Genghis Khan and his successors is trustworthy.

Mr. Curtin points out in his initial chapter how from an obscure beginning the word Mongol has gone on increasing in significance and spreading geographically during more than ten centuries. From the time when men used it first until the present day the name has been employed chiefly in three senses. In the primary sense it refers to some small groups of hunters and herdsmen living north of the great Gobi desert; in the second sense it denotes certain peoples in Asia and eastern Europe; in the third and most recent sense an almost worldwide extension has been given it. In this third and broad sense the word Mongol has been made to include in one category all yellow skinned nations or peoples, including those with a reddish brown or dark tinge in the yellow. They are also assumed to have straight hair, always black, and dark eyes of various degrees of intensity. In this sense the word Mongol coordinates immense groups of men who in some traits are like one another but are widely dissimilar in others. It comprehends the Chinese, the Coreans, the Japanese, the Manchus and the original Mongols, with their near relatives, the Tatar or Turkish tribes, that hold central Asia or most of it. Moving southwestward from China the term covers the Tibetans, and with them all the non-Aryan nations and tribes, until India and Persia are reached. In India also, whose most striking history in modern ages is Mongol, nearly all populations, except those which are plainly of Aryan or Semitic stock, are classified with Mongols. In Persia, where the dynasty is Mongol, the Mongolian race is preponderant in places and important throughout the kingdom, even where it is in a minority. In Asia Minor the Mongol is master, for the Turk is still sovereign and will be till a complete rearrangement of southeastern Europe and western Asia is brought about. Mr. Curtin reminds us that five groups of Mongols have made themselves famous in Europe: the Huns, under their mighty chief Attila; the Bulgars, the Magyars, the Mongol invaders of Russia in the thirteenth century, and the Turks or Osmanli, who captured Constantinople about the middle of the fifteenth century. In Africa too there have been and still are Mongols. Theoretically at least the Turkish dominion exists in Egypt and in Tripoli. Not restricted to the Eastern Hemisphere, the word Mongol is now often used to include aboriginal man in America. Thus this great aggregation of human beings is found in all parts of both hemispheres, and the Mongols cannot be considered historically in a wide sense of the name unless we consider all mankind.

Turning now to the original and narrowest sense of the word, our author recognizes that the term was first applicable only to those Mongols who during twelve centuries or more have inhabited the country immediately south of Lake Baikal and north of the great Gobi Desert. It is from these Mongols proper that the appellation has at last been extended to the whole yellow race in both hemispheres. It is often said that the word Mongol was coined by the Chinese, but Mr. Curtin deems this doubtful. He admits, however, that the Chinese made the name known to the outside world, and thus opened the way to the wide application now given it. In the Middle Kingdom, the Tang dynasty lasted from A. D. 618 to A. D. 907, and left an interesting history of its own, in which the term Mongol appears as Mong-ku, whereas in the annals of the Khitan dynasty, which followed the Tang, the form used is Mong-ku-li. The Khitans were succeeded by the Golden Khans, or Khin Emperors, and in the annals of their line the Mong-ku are very often mentioned.

There seems to be no doubt that the Mongols began their career somewhat south of Lake Baikal, in a region where six rivers rise in a very remarkable mountain tract. Three of these, the Onon, the Ingoda and the Kerulon, are the main western sources of that immense waterway the Amur, which enters the Sea of Okhotsk and thus finds the Pacific. The other three rivers, the Tula, Orhon and Selinga, flow into Lake Baikal, and thence, through the Lower Angara and the Yenissei, are merged in Arctic waters, directly in front of Nova Zembla. These two water systems begin in the Kentei Khan Mountains, which have as their most elevated peak Mount Burham. The six rivers, while flowing either toward the Amur or toward Lake Baikal, water the whole stretch of country where, as far as we know, the activity of the Mongols began. There they moved about with their large and small cattle, fought, robbed and hunted, ate and drank and slew one another during unreckoned centuries. In that region of forest and grass land, of mountains and valleys, of rivers, large and small, the air is bracing, though piercingly cold during winter and exceedingly hot in the summer months. There was subsistence enough for a simple life in that country, but men had to fight for it savagely. Flocks and herds, when they have grown numerous, need immense spaces to feed in, and the necessary areas of pasture land caused unending struggle and bloodshed.

This grabbing of pasture and forest, this stealing of cattle and capture of women continued for ages with no apparent results except those which were personal, local and transient, till Temudjin, the great Mongol—better known to us as Genghis Khan—appeared in that rough mountain country. This man summed up in himself and intensified to the utmost the ideas, strength, temper and spirit of his race as they had been presented in action and life up to his day. He placed the Mongols on the stage of the world with a skill and a power that were colossal and all conquering. The results which he achieved were immediate and terrifying. As Mr. Curtin truly says, no man born of woman has had thus far in history a success so peculiar, so thorough and perfect, so completely acknowledged by mankind, as the success won by Temudjin. We seem to feel in his career an irresistible sequence, a finish, a oneness of character, that sets it apart among all the careers of those mighty men in history who worked for this life and no other, who strove for no object save that which is tangible, material and present—success of such kind, and success so enormous, that a common intelligence might yearn for it but would have no more chance of winning it than of reaching the stars or of seeing the sun at midnight. Almost all thoughtful men will concur with the author of this book in pronouncing the career of this Mongol unique on this earth, unapproachable, since its object was unmixed and immediate and his success in attaining it was so great that it appears, we might almost say, superhuman.

The story of Genghis Khan, as here recounted, is followed by the story of his successors, including, of course, the famous Tamerlane down to the fifteenth century. During some two hundred years Mongol princes strove unceasingly to regain lost dominion, yielding to China when sufficient force was sent against them or attacking border provinces of the empire when those provinces were left unguarded. At last, toward the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Ming dynasty was nearing its downfall in the Middle Kingdom, the Mongols found themselves divided into groups under various small chieftains, each of whom bore the title of Khan. After the Manchu dynasty had won control in China, about the middle of the seventeenth century, it took under its protection the easternmost Mongols and with their aid conquered nearly all the rest. Since 1760 most of the Mongols proper have been subject to China, while a remnant is under Russian rule.

It was Mr. Curtin's conviction that, remarkable as has been the part played by the Mongols in history, the part yet to be played by them may be far more memorable. How great and how varied that part may prove and of what character is one of the secrets of the future.

RUSSIAN RAILROAD STORY.

How a Student Thought to Relieve the Tedium of Travel.

St. Petersburg correspondence London Globe.

The tedium of railway travelling in Russia was relieved the other day in an unexpected manner. In a compartment of the train going from Kursk to Kief sat a beautiful young lady next to a chatty priest, with whom she held an animated conversation. Opposite sat a student who envied the priest the causerie which he was enjoying.

As the evening came on the girl fell asleep and the priest nodded his head in slumber. That was an opportunity which no self-respecting practical joker could afford to let slip. Bending forward, the student kissed the sleeping damsel and sprang back into his seat.

The salute awakened the girl, who, thinking that it was her neighbor, the priest, who had dared to kiss her, jumped up and gave him a sounding box on the ears. The student rejoiced greatly. There was a commotion, the policeman accompanying the train was summoned, and he at once drew up a "protocol" against the wronged priest, while the student offered to appear as a witness in the law court at Kief.

But at the last moment a young Jewess who had been sitting in a dark corner unobserved by anybody stepped forward, exonerated the poor priest from the terrible accusation, and then it was the student's turn to feel miserable.